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## Excavation

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# Excavation

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We start from this place, and get to  
that place, me with my boots, you  
with your bootstraps: algorithms  
churning, calculating, quantizing.

You explain, there is no fear here,  
only beauties to unearth. I ask, what  
is the value of an idea, compared—  
say to a ruby or a diamond?

You lower your hands, shaking your  
head slowly. Not unaccustomed  
to this question, but not really eager  
to mount the defense.

Yet something in my question allures,  
perhaps its sincerity, and you persist.  
You try to reach out across distances,  
both conceptual and psychological.

Then it comes: this work is not a burden,  
it is a privilege. The ability to render  
a structure understandable, to parse, to  
construct meaning out of desolation—

It is like excavation, hours spent sifting  
through the dust and dirty sand. You  
mean a theorem is like a dinosaur? I ask,  
jittering, now visibly, with excitement.

No, not a dinosaur, those are the bones  
of what was once living. That which I  
find is not the end of a life, but the  
beginning of one. Or the middle.